

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 181

By Lowe

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Larry Dean Wallace, Sr.,  
of McMinn County.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that we should honor the memory of those citizens who, through their extraordinary efforts, distinguished themselves as community leaders of whom we can all be proud; and

WHEREAS, one such noteworthy person was Larry Dean Wallace, Sr.; and

WHEREAS, a former Director of the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation, Colonel of the Tennessee Highway Patrol, and Senior Vice President of Tennessee Wesleyan University, Larry Wallace was an exemplary public servant and consummate professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for his fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Wallace was a sixth-generation native of McMinn County and the son of Ballard and Martha Wallace; and

WHEREAS, the first of his family to attend college, Larry Wallace earned an Associate of Science degree from Cleveland State Community College, a Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice from Middle Tennessee State University, and a master's degree in criminal justice from Tennessee State University; and

WHEREAS, a graduate of the prestigious FBI National Executive Institute, Mr. Wallace began his exemplary forty-year career in law enforcement in 1964 with the Athens Police Department; he joined the Tennessee Highway Patrol in 1967 and was promoted to special agent with the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation (TBI) in 1973; and

WHEREAS, Larry Wallace took a leave of absence from the TBI in 1976 to serve as sheriff of McMinn County; during his second term of elected office as sheriff, he was honored to be named the 1979 Tennessee Sheriff of the Year by the Tennessee Sheriffs' Association; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Wallace returned to the TBI in 1980 and was promoted to Special Agent in Charge of the Criminal Investigation Division in 1984; he was appointed Colonel and

Commanding Officer of the Tennessee Highway Patrol (THP) in 1987 and was named Deputy Commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Safety the following year; and

WHEREAS, in 1992, Larry Wallace was appointed by Governor Ned McWherter to serve a six-year term as director of the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation, which made him the highest-ranking law enforcement official in the State; during his first term as director, the TBI became the third state criminal investigative agency in the country to receive international accreditation through the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies and the American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Wallace was reappointed to a second six-year term as TBI director by Governor Don Sundquist in 1998; he continued serving in that position under Governor Phil Bredesen until his retirement from State government in December 2003; and

WHEREAS, Larry Wallace holds the distinction of being the only individual in the history of this State to serve as both Director of the TBI and Colonel of the THP; and

WHEREAS, after returning home to McMinn County, Mr. Wallace was invited to join the faculty of Tennessee Wesleyan University on January 1, 2004; during his career in higher education, he developed and taught a criminal justice curriculum and was named Vice President for External Affairs in 2005 and Vice President for Administration in 2007; and

WHEREAS, in 2010, Larry Wallace was promoted to the office of Senior Vice President, a position he held with distinction until his retirement in 2014; he remained very involved with the school until his final days as a member of the board of trustees; and

WHEREAS, for his outstanding leadership and service, he was awarded an honorary doctorate of public administration from Tennessee Wesleyan University in 2016, and the university honored him for his lifetime of service to Tennessee with the dedication of Wallace Square in 2020; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Wallace also ably served as chairman of the board of directors of Athens Federal Community Bank (AFCB) and its holding company, Athens Bancshares Corporation, until October 1, 2018, when AFCB and CapStar Bank legally merged; and

WHEREAS, dedicated to his community, Larry Wallace had served as foreman of the McMinn County Grand Jury since 2014; he also was honored to serve as a member of the board of directors of Athens Federal Foundation, which annually provides substantial funding to nonprofit organizations helping those McMinn, Bradley, Monroe, and Loudon county citizens who need it most; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Wallace was a proud member of the Hiwassee Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution, the Meridian Sun Lodge #50 F&AM, and the Athens Lodge 32 of the Fraternal Order of Police for more than fifty years; and

WHEREAS, dedicated to the well-being of animals throughout his life, Larry Wallace helped facilitate the expansion of the McMinn County and the City of Athens' animal shelter by enlisting the assistance of inmates from the former Brushy Mountain State Penitentiary, and he worked tirelessly as a board member of the McMinn County Regional Humane Society to develop a plan and raise funds for a new animal shelter; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Wallace was an active and devout member and former lay minister of Keith Memorial United Methodist Church in Athens; and

WHEREAS, deeply devoted to his family, he always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, among those left to cherish his memory are his daughter, Deborah Wallace; daughter-in-law, Susie Wallace; stepdaughter, Kayla Evans Duff; granddaughters, Ashley Wallace Copeland and Aaliyah Coffey; grandsons, Joseph Wallace, Dakota Wallace Evans, and Bradley Coffey; great-grandsons, Maddux Wallace and Tucker Wallace; great-granddaughter, Whitley Jo Wallace; and devoted special friend, Melissa Blevins; and

WHEREAS, Larry Wallace was preceded in death by his son, Larry Dean Wallace, Jr.; great-grandson, Mason Wallace; brother and sister, Robert "Bob" Wallace and Betty Wallace; and beloved pets, Pepper, Pookie, Sam, and Trooper; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Wallace leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is most appropriate that we should remember the bountiful life of this exceptional public servant and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRTEENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor the life and memory of Larry Dean Wallace, Sr., reflecting fondly upon his impeccable character, his contributions to the people of Tennessee, and his stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy and upon proper request made to the appropriate clerk, the language appearing immediately following the State seal appear without House or Senate designation.